United Nations CRPD/C/SR.380

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Distr.: General
9 March 2018

Original: English

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Nineteenth session

Summary record of the 380th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 28 February 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Degener

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35 (*continued*)

Initial report of the Russian Federation (*continued*) (CRPD/C/RUS/1; CRPD/C/RUS/Q/1 and CRPD/C/RUS/Q/1/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Russian Federation took places at the Committee table.*

Articles 11–20

2. **Mr. Kamkin** (Russian Federation), responding to questions put at the previous meeting, said that prenatal screening for congenital conditions and developmental problems was carried out with the sole purpose of providing timely medical treatment. Medical practice was developing fast, and, increasingly, advanced techniques such as fetal surgery could treat certain conditions during gestation.

3. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation), responding to a question about a case in which children with disabilities had been removed from a foster family, said that the separation had not come about as the result of the mother's desire to change gender. Foster families in the Russian Federation were required to meet a series of requirements, which included reporting on the education and living conditions of the children in their care; during a regular check of the foster family's home, unsanitary living conditions had been discovered. The guardianship authorities had therefore decided to remove the children from that environment. Only afterwards had the mother's intention to change gender come to light. Regarding adoption, the Government would review the rule according to which persons with category I disabilities were not permitted to adopt as part of its update of the list of illnesses that prevented a person from adopting a child.

4. **Mr. Kamkin** (Russian Federation), responding to questions about the availability of new technologies for persons with disabilities, said that a programme launched three years earlier tested new diagnostic equipment and technology that could be used to help persons with disabilities to restore lost functions. For example, a groundbreaking operation had recently been performed to enable a person with visual impairment to partially regain his sight through the implantation of bionic eyes. Much progress had also been made in the development of prosthetic limbs. The programme was funded exclusively through the federal budget and any methods approved for general use were covered by the Programme on State Guarantees for the Provision of Free Medical Care to Citizens.

5. **Mr. Dymochka** (Russian Federation) added that the Government had been trying to expand the range and use of advanced means of rehabilitation, such as the use of prostheses, orthopaedic devices and information technologies.

6. **Mr. Korneev** (Russian Federation) said that the Russian Federation complied fully with article 12 of the Convention. All citizens enjoyed legal capacity throughout their lives. In the Russian legal system, however, only persons with dispositive capacity could exercise such capacity. Dispositive capacity was acquired at the age of 18. Persons with severe mental or intellectual impairments could be deprived of their dispositive capacity by a court, but could not lose their legal capacity. A guardian or family member could exercise legal capacity on behalf of a person who had been declared not to have dispositive capacity. Persons with disabilities had full legal capacity with regard to property and assets. They were able to open bank accounts and own, inherit and dispose of property.

7. Judges and other staff of the Russian courts regularly took part in continuing education courses and the highest judicial authorities carried out reviews of the administration of justice in cases in which one of the parties had a disability. There were no recorded cases of courts rejecting statements made by persons with disabilities. Any refusal of protection by the courts was a violation of the Russian Constitution and federal legislation. The Russian courts always did their utmost to ensure that persons with disabilities could defend their rights. In civil cases, parties who needed sign language interpretation or documentation in Braille were required to make their own arrangements.

Any costs incurred were borne by the losing party. In criminal cases, the State was required to provide sign language interpretation and documentation in Braille, when needed. Persons with disabilities were in no way prevented from working as judges in the Russian Federation. Unfortunately, he had not been able to obtain any statistics on the number of persons with disabilities currently working as judges.

8. Over 3,000 court buildings were accessible to persons with disabilities, and 73 per cent of those buildings were also equipped with lifts, ramps and other accessibility devices within the building. Any plans to carry out work on existing court buildings or to construct new ones must be prepared in consultation with persons with limited mobility. Funding allocated to accessibility improvements in 2018 amounted to €160 million; the amount was expected to rise to €180 million by 2020.

9. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation), responding to a question regarding partial legal capacity, said that efforts were being made to adopt an approach that took into account the opinions, wishes and preferences of the individuals involved. Work was under way on a bill on guardianship whereby persons without full dispositive capacity could make decisions themselves, with the help of their guardians.

10. **Ms. Sosnina** (Russian Federation) said that that psychoneurological institutions were regulated by the Principles of Social Services Act, adopted in 2013, and the legislation of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. Citizens were placed in psychoneurological institutions on the basis of a personal application or one made by their legal representative. All social care services were provided with respect for human rights and dignity. Before the deinstitutionalization process could proceed, changes had to be brought about in various areas of society to ensure dignified living conditions for persons with disabilities. Community-based services that allowed users to remain in their own homes were being developed as part of the effort to phase out institutional care. Such services included foster families for adults and assisted living for persons with intellectual impairments. However, such changes could be costly. The Government would welcome advice from the Committee on how to accelerate the deinstitutionalization process. In the meantime, it was working on improving the living conditions of persons in institutions.

11. The activities of psychoneurological institutions were monitored not only by the State, but also by individual citizens and human rights organizations. Under recently amended legislation, independent assessments of psychoneurological homes would be carried out at least every three years on the basis of criteria such as comfort, quality of staff and satisfaction with the services provided. Around one third of all persons with disabilities residing in psychoneurological homes were enrolled in educational programmes and plans had been made to increase access to education in the coming years.

12. **Mr. Kamkin** (Russian Federation), responding to a question about the treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons, said that what was generally referred to as "deviant behaviour" in the Russian Federation was not considered to be an illness and LGBT persons were therefore not treated in medical institutions.

13. **Mr. Belik** (Russian Federation) said that the Ministry of Internal Affairs had been training police officers in the use of Russian Sign Language since 2016. Persons who held certain positions within the police force, such as patrol officers and criminal investigators, were required to possess basic knowledge of Russian Sign Language. Some 8,000 officers had been trained thus far.

14. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation), adding that police officers were required to have only a basic command of sign language, said that the Government had been working on increasing the accessibility of the emergency number 112; persons who were deaf or hard of hearing could now use the service in 43 regions.

15. **Ms. Pelevina** (Russian Federation) said that in the previous six months two criminal cases involving the maltreatment of children had been brought against officials from institutions and one criminal case involving financial fraud had been brought against the head of a social care facility for adults. Prosecutors immediately investigated all claims or indications that the rights of persons with disabilities had been violated and took appropriate action to stop violations when they occurred. Under civil procedure legislation,

citizens with disabilities could request legal assistance and protection of their rights from the prosecutor's office. The prosecutor provided legal counsel during proceedings and monitored the enforcement of any decisions arising from those proceedings. In 2017 there had been some 20,000 such cases.

16. **Mr. Belik** (Russian Federation) said that, according to statistics compiled by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, around 11,000 offences against persons with disabilities had been recorded in 2014, more than 12,000 had been recorded in 2015, and around 11,000 had been recorded in 2016. About half were ordinary offences, such as theft. No cases of abduction, trafficking or slave labour involving persons with disabilities had been recorded in the reporting period.

17. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that any rights violations relating to living conditions, physical and psychological violence, education or the provision of food and drinking water in State institutions were unacceptable. Investigations would be carried out in the ten institutions referred to in the report of Human Rights Watch and any public officials found to have committed human rights violations would be severely punished.

18. **Mr. Dymochka** (Russian Federation) said that assessments of the type and severity of disability were carried out on the basis of a biopsychosocial model of disability, using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. Assessments began by identifying potential environmental barriers to independent living. To ensure transparency and objectivity, a quantitative approach was adopted, which made it possible to determine the particular services and technical equipment necessary for rehabilitation. The Government was focusing on improving the assessment of children to ensure that age-specific developmental issues were taken into account and that quality care and rehabilitation were provided. Efforts had been made to render services more accessible, and the possibility of providing remote electronic services was being studied. In most public institutions, electronic queueing was available to reduce the need to wait in line. Data relating to the physical impairments of and assistive devices used by individual persons with disabilities could be transferred to the federal register of persons with disabilities, allowing those persons to take full advantage of the services provided by the State.

19. **Ms. Larionova** (Russian Federation) said that the federal prison service had made a number of amendments to its regulatory framework so as to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities in the prison system. For example, prisoners with disabilities were always housed on the ground floor and had 24-hour access to medical services. Their special dietary needs were accommodated and they could be provided with special clothing and footwear. They could also be provided with rehabilitation equipment and assistive devices. A road map for the implementation of rehabilitation services in detention centres had been devised in 2015. Persons with disabilities could participate in prison educational programmes without any limitations. Juveniles followed the standard school curriculum and were provided with sign language interpretation if needed. In 2017, the prison service had begun efforts to acquire a fleet of specially equipped vehicles for transporting inmates with disabilities. In total, 20,054 persons with disabilities were serving sentences in the penitentiary system.

20. Prisons were monitored on several levels, by both State agencies and civil society groups, to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities were respected. Members of public commissions had unimpeded access to penitentiary facilities and were free to express their views and submit recommendations for improvement. The prison service was required by law to implement such recommendations. More than 100 round-table discussions with public monitoring commissions had been held over the previous 12 months on issues such as medical support, social assistance and education in the penitentiary system. Persons with disabilities had participated in those discussions. Through close collaboration with the All-Russia Society of Blind Persons, the prison system had supplied more than 3,500 books in Braille to various penitentiary institutions in 2017.

21. **Mr. Korneev** (Russian Federation) said that, under Russian law, non-governmental organizations were not barred from receiving funding from abroad. Moreover, in 2016, changes had been made to domestic legislation whereby non-profit organizations that received foreign funding were not included in the register of foreign agents if they were

engaged in carrying out social support activities for persons with disabilities. In total, 6,790 organizations of persons with disabilities were active in the Russian Federation. Pursuant to legislative amendments made in 2017, non-profit organizations categorized as socially oriented received financial support from the State. All organizations of persons with disabilities in the country were eligible for such funding.

22. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that master's degrees in tactile and sign language interpretation were now offered in over 80 educational institutions. The All-Russia Society of Deaf Persons employed over 1,000 sign language interpreters. Their salaries were paid by the State and their services were provided free of charge to persons with hearing impairments. Eleven institutions offered training in Russian Sign Language as part of the Accessible Environment Programme. Russian Sign Language had been granted official status under the Principles of Social Services Act. There were currently about 5,000 sign language interpreters. The number required was estimated at 7,000. As the need for sign language interpreters was expected to grow, the Government would continue its efforts to train more sign language interpreters.

23. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that educational establishments at all levels of schooling were required to ensure access to quality education for persons with disabilities, for example by providing technical aids and adapting the curriculum as appropriate. The special needs of individual children with disabilities were determined by a team of health workers. Educational establishments were required to provide sign language interpreting and Braille resources where necessary. Teacher training at all levels of education covered the basics of sign language interpreting, as well as teaching methods that were tailored to the needs of hard-of-hearing persons. Those methods had been approved by the All-Russia Society of Deaf Persons. In order to tackle the shortage of sign language interpreters, steps had been taken to increase the capacity of training courses and to develop professional standards so as to increase the prestige associated with the profession and thus attract more trainees.

24. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that decisions on disability issues made by authorities at any level without the participation of persons with disabilities could be nullified by a court. Organizations of persons with disabilities had helped to run workshops on the implementation of the Convention at the regional level, and local and regional authorities were being encouraged to work more closely with such organizations. In order to improve the implementation of the Accessible Environment Programme at the regional level, the Government, in collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities, had identified 35,000 facilities as priorities for adaptation. Once those facilities had been renovated, the Government would seek feedback from persons with disabilities and try to address any outstanding concerns.

25. Public agencies were required to ensure that their websites were accessible to persons with disabilities. Improvements would be made to those websites as appropriate, taking into account the views of persons with disabilities and relevant international standards. Private enterprises were also being encouraged to develop accessible websites and mobile applications. One major bank had taken steps to review and improve the accessibility of its services, including its automatic teller machines.

Articles 21–33

26. **Mr. Ruskus** said that he would like to know what efforts were being made to collect data on persons with disabilities, disaggregated by type of impairment, age and place of residence, at the national and regional levels. He would also appreciate information on any disability-related research being conducted in line with article 4 (1) (f) of the Convention and on the involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities in data collection and research.

27. **Mr. You** Liang, noting that all applicants to higher education programmes were required to undergo a medical examination, asked whether persons with disabilities were ever denied access to higher education on the basis of that examination. He wondered to what extent the results of such examinations affected the employment prospects of higher education graduates with disabilities and whether higher education establishments provided

reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. He also wondered whether persons with disabilities could be recruited as civil servants. In addition, he would like to hear how disability issues had been incorporated into the national programme for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

28. **Mr. Ishikawa** said that he would like to know whether persons with disabilities who were employed in the special posts mentioned in paragraph 167 of the State party's replies to the list of issues (CRPD/C/RUS/Q/1/Add.1) were provided with reasonable accommodation and whether they enjoyed equal opportunities for promotion and received equal pay for work of equal value. He would also like clarification of whether Russian legislation clearly prohibited the dismissal of an employee who developed a visual impairment or other disability during his or her employment.

29. **Mr. Basharu** said that he would appreciate information on the support services available to parents with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities to enable them to raise their children in dignity and to cover any disability-related costs. He wondered whether there were plans to revoke article 32 (3) of the Russian Constitution, which established that persons lacking in legal capacity did not have the right to vote. He also wished to know what assistance was provided to voters with disabilities, especially at polling stations, and how many persons with disabilities had been elected to the State Duma or to regional and local councils. Lastly, he would be interested in learning what steps would be taken to shift the focus of international cooperation from disability prevention to promotion of the rights enshrined in the Convention and to involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the preparation of international cooperation agreements.

30. **Mr. Tatić** (Country Rapporteur) said that it would be helpful to know how many decisions on disability issues had been nullified because persons with disabilities had not been properly consulted. He wondered whether the delegation could identify three or four areas of focus for the future, in the light of its dialogue with the Committee. He would welcome more information on the accessibility of tourist attractions and cultural sites for persons with disabilities, especially football stadiums, given that the State party would be hosting the 2018 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup. He wished to emphasize that all facilities that were open to the public, including those run by private entities, should be accessible to persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Committee's general comment No. 2 on accessibility.

31. **Mr. Parra Dussan** said that he would like clarification as to whether the State party's special schools remained in operation and whether persons with disabilities were placed in those schools only when strictly necessary. He also wondered what measures had been taken to implement the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled; whether the State party had established digital libraries of accessible works; whether it exchanged such works with other countries; and how copyright issues were handled in that context.

32. **Mr. Buntan** said that he would welcome more information on practical and legislative measures taken to enforce physical accessibility standards throughout the country and on the legal status of accessible forms of communication such as Braille, sign language and Easy Read. The Committee had been informed that there were many abandoned children with disabilities in orphanages, very few of whom were adopted. He wondered what measures had been taken to promote foster care for such children, as opposed to institutionalization. Information on any action taken to remove the barriers faced by parents with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities would also be welcome. In addition, he would like to know how the State party intended to ensure that the specific learning needs of children with disabilities were met in mainstream schools. He wondered whether there were any plans to abolish the requirement that applicants to higher education programmes must undergo a medical examination. Lastly, he wished to know whether the State party had designated an independent mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Convention and whether a system had been established to ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities participated regularly in the monitoring process.

33. **Mr. Babu** said that the Ministry of Education and Science should consider issuing guidelines on the regional implementation of Federal Act No. 273-FZ, which prohibited the exclusion of children with disabilities from education. He would like to know what measures were in place to ensure that persons with disabilities, especially women, had access to HIV/AIDS treatment and support services and whether the State party had adopted a national strategy on HIV/AIDS. If so, had persons with disabilities and their representative organizations participated in the development of that strategy?

34. **Mr. Chaker** said that he would appreciate more information on the percentage of persons with disabilities who were in formal employment in the public and private sectors and on the situation of persons with mental disabilities with respect to employment.

35. **Mr. Lovászy** (Country Rapporteur) said that he would like to know more about the protocols and legal basis for the use of injections to control sexual behaviour in institutions. He wondered whether the special education arrangements described in paragraph 152 of the State party's replies to the list of issues amounted to a form of segregation and whether the increased provision of remote learning services had resulted in the isolation of children with disabilities; clarification on those points would be appreciated. He also wished to know whether the Government had drawn up a strategy for the implementation of inclusive education, establishing a time frame, indicators and a monitoring mechanism.

36. Noting that it was unclear whether ambulances had been adapted to cater for all types of disability, he asked whether the delegation could provide specific examples of adaptations made to those vehicles. He would welcome more information on the protocols governing the provision of cochlear implants and steps taken to inform parents of hard-of-hearing children about all options available to them. It would also be interesting to learn what services, aside from medical assistance, were made available to parents of children who were diagnosed with a disability. He would like to know how current legislation protected persons with disabilities, especially persons with psychosocial disabilities, from being denied the necessary medicines and health care. He was also curious to know which party carried the burden of proof in labour discrimination cases. Lastly, he wondered why the accessibility of tourist accommodation was evaluated solely in relation to the needs of persons with limited physical capacities.

37. **Mr. Alsaif** said that he would like more information on support provided to families of persons with disabilities and on the special posts mentioned in paragraph 167 of the State party's replies to the list of issues.

38. **Mr. Kabue** said that he would like to know who was responsible for determining whether a person with disabilities required personal assistance and on what basis such determinations were made. He would also appreciate more information on the role of the family support specialist and on the content of the bill on support for the employment of persons with disabilities. Lastly, he wondered why it had been necessary to update the procedure for applying for supplementary pension assistance, what that procedure now entailed and whom it concerned.

39. **Mr. Martin** invited the delegation to give two examples of public information that had been made available in Easy Read format.

40. **The Chair** said that she would like to know what steps had been taken to ensure that women with disabilities enjoyed equal access to sexual and reproductive health services and information and to prevent forced abortion and forced sterilization, particularly among women and girls with intellectual disabilities. The delegation's interpretation of legal capacity was not in line with the Committee's general comment No. 1 on equal recognition before the law, which made it clear that legal capacity covered both legal standing and legal agency. Under the Convention, all persons with intellectual disabilities were considered to have legal capacity.

The meeting was suspended at 11.55 a.m. and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

41. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that data were collected on a variety of disability issues on an annual basis. In addition, the federal register of persons with disabilities contained a wealth of data, compiled from a range of sources, on the living situation and needs of individuals. Those data were disaggregated by characteristics such as

gender, type of impairment and region. Efforts were being made to improve the accuracy of the register and to ensure that those responsible for data input were held accountable for any errors. At present, the register was updated on a quarterly basis, but there were plans to streamline the data collection system so as to make the data available in real time. The Government worked closely with organizations of persons with disabilities to develop data collection mechanisms and ensure data protection. The federal register would be used to find out more about the needs and concerns of specific categories of persons with disabilities, such as wheelchair users. In addition, persons with disabilities took part in surveys conducted by the Federal State Statistics Service on a broad range of issues, such as access to education and employment.

42. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that the provision of tertiary education for persons with disabilities had been improved under a 2016–2017 comprehensive plan for inclusive professional education for persons with disabilities. Students were no longer required to provide a medical certificate when applying for a higher education programme. Ten per cent of all university places were reserved for persons with disabilities.

43. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation), acknowledging that quotas for the employment of persons with disabilities were not always filled, said that the Government planned to review and improve the implementation of the quota system. It was considering establishing a procedure whereby employers that failed to meet the relevant quota would be required to contribute to a special fund, which would be used to create jobs for persons with disabilities. Organizations with at least 100 employees were required to allocate between 2 and 4 per cent of posts to persons with disabilities. The competitive examinations for entry to the civil service were open to persons with disabilities and such persons were well represented in government ministries. They were also well represented in the State Duma. The Government aimed to incorporate disability provisions into all national strategies and plans.

44. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that higher education institutions employed persons with disabilities, including persons who had visual or hearing impairments. Reasonable accommodation was provided to both students and teaching staff with disabilities who otherwise met the relevant criteria for admission or employment. In all higher education institutions, a record was kept of the steps already taken and to be taken to improve the accessibility of campus buildings. Each higher education institution also had a road map for improving its accessibility indicators and a specialist responsible for providing students and teaching staff with disabilities with information on assistive devices. Special resource centres tasked with ensuring the availability of equipment and information in accessible formats had already been set up in a number of higher education institutions and more were scheduled to open before the end of the year.

45. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that persons who developed a visual impairment or other disability during their employment were accommodated, not dismissed. However, there were cases in which the individual's disability or health status made it impossible for him or her to continue working in the same job. The Government was working with the State employment service to develop special support measures for such persons. Every effort was made to find them alternative employment in the same company or similar employment in a different company.

46. **Ms. Sosnina** (Russian Federation) said that all families with children were entitled to child benefits, which could be used to cover the cost of education, housing or the installation of accessibility features. Parents who did not work because they were caring for children with disabilities were entitled to a special benefit. Furthermore, the Labour Code required employers to allow parents of children with disabilities who were under 18 years of age to work part time upon request.

47. **Mr. Egorshev** (Russian Federation), said that the Government's experience in hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games would stand it in good stead as it prepared to host the FIFA World Cup in 2018. No effort had been spared to ensure that spectators with disabilities could enjoy the event on an equal basis with others and explore the cities where matches would be held without restriction. Some $6 billion had been invested in improving the national transport infrastructure, including by modernizing transport hubs and

purchasing vehicles that were adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities. A special effort was being made to ensure that trains could accommodate passengers with disabilities. New passenger terminals had been built at several airports, and existing terminals at other airports had been refurbished. Those infrastructure improvements would also facilitate travel for future visitors with disabilities.

48. **Ms. Kornienko** (Russian Federation) said that the accessibility of existing sports infrastructure was also being reviewed and, where necessary, improved. New stadiums had been built, and stadiums that had been constructed for the Olympic Games were being refurbished in line with FIFA accessibility requirements. Wheelchair-friendly areas had been created, lifts to all levels had been installed and points of entry had been widened.

49. In the Russian Federation, historic sites appearing on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List had to be accessible to persons with disabilities. Efforts were under way to adapt sites that did not yet meet that requirement, while paying due attention to the need to preserve features of intrinsic cultural and historical value.

50. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that Russian law required both State entities and private companies to ensure that the services that they provided were accessible to persons with disabilities. It was unlawful to refuse services on the basis of disability. The process of renovating all the public buildings that were currently inaccessible to persons with disabilities was understandably lengthy and complex. Until the renovations were completed, service providers were obliged to deliver services to persons with disabilities by alternative means.

51. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that children with disabilities could either be placed in mainstream schools, in line with the inclusive approach to education prioritized in the Law on Education, or in special schools. It was up to parents to decide which kind of establishment would be most suitable. The network of special schools for children with disabilities was being expanded to meet growing demand. Children with disabilities who attended special schools were not segregated. They were free to participate alongside non-disabled children in a range of cultural and educational activities and events organized for students. Sign language was taught in schools in accordance with federal educational standards for persons with hearing impairments.

52. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that Russian law laid down specific requirements intended to guarantee the accessibility of services to persons with all kinds of disabilities. A mechanism was in place to monitor compliance with those requirements in all sectors. Service providers that failed to meet the requirements were sanctioned.

53. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that the number of children with disabilities who had become orphans had been reduced considerably as a result of an effective national policy. A series of measures had been taken to discourage parents from abandoning children with disabilities and to promote the adoption of children with disabilities. Families that adopted such children received increased benefits to help provide them with adequate care. Doctors provided information to new mothers whose children were diagnosed with a disability about the types of assistance they could receive and about the children's future prospects. Parents interested in adopting children with disabilities could participate in a special programme to learn about living with and caring for such children.

54. **Mr. Kamkin** (Russian Federation) said that a national strategy to prevent the spread of HIV had been adopted in 2016. The strategy provided for access to free medication for persons infected with HIV. Of the 1 million or so HIV-infected people in the Russian Federation, just under 50 per cent were receiving antiretroviral therapy. The share of the national budget allocated to the provision of antiretroviral treatment grew every year, and it was hoped that all persons infected with HIV would soon be able to receive treatment.

55. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that the bill on support for the employment of persons with disabilities had been signed into law and would enter into force on 1 January 2019. Its purpose was to assist persons with disabilities in finding work through the provision of targeted support. The adoption of the bill had been welcomed by persons with

disabilities and employers alike and had led to a positive change in attitude towards the former. Employment specialists were being trained to provide persons with disabilities with the necessary support, identify barriers to employment and work with employers to ensure employee retention.

56. **Mr. Kamkin** (Russian Federation) said that the use of cochlear implant surgery was part of a more high-tech approach to rehabilitation. Persons who underwent the procedure received support, such as speech therapy, to help them adapt to their new environment.

57. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that the Ministry of Education and Science had published numerous guidelines and recommendations to assist regional authorities in implementing Federal Act No. 273-FZ, including with regard to requirements relating to the learning environment for children with disabilities, the qualifications of teaching staff who worked with such children, and funding for the implementation of special programmes, the purchase of specialized equipment and the hiring of specialists.

58. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) thanked the members of the Committee for a fruitful dialogue and said that the Government would continue to promote accessibility improvements, the provision of reasonable accommodation, early intervention, assisted living, the employment of persons with disabilities and the training of civil servants and judges. It would also work to strengthen links with organizations of persons with disabilities. The Government recognized the need to tackle the issue of institutionalization and was striving to put in place alternative living arrangements for persons with disabilities. The Committee's recommendations would be given due consideration by the Presidential Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

59. **Ms. Goncharenko** (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation) said that the High Commissioner believed the existence of an active NGO network to be the key to resolving human rights issues, including those relating to persons with disabilities. She had noted with satisfaction that many of the suggestions and recommendations made by Committee members were in line with those made by the High Commissioner. There was a pressing need to improve the conditions in psychoneurological centres and to deinstitutionalize children with disabilities. Although progress had been made in implementing the Accessible Environment Programme, the implementation mechanism remained complex, hindering further progress. The Government should devote more efforts to creating an accessible environment for persons with disabilities in penitentiary facilities. In addition to the High Commissioner, there was a comprehensive network of regional commissioners for human rights who would take the steps necessary to prevent any kind of discrimination against persons with disabilities during the FIFA World Cup.

60. **Mr. Tatić** said that he was encouraged by the importance the State party attached to accessibility, deinstitutionalization and cooperation with organizations of persons with disabilities, which were cornerstones of the Convention. It had been useful to gain a better understanding of the challenges impeding the implementation of the Convention across the State party's national territory and of the steps taken to overcome them.

61. **Mr. Lovászy** said that, in view of the many obstacles hindering the full implementation of the Convention, the State party should pay careful attention to the Committee's concluding observations, which should be made available to persons with disabilities in accessible formats.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.